Impressions

TRAINING
MANUAL

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PART I: A SHAKEDOWN CRUISE

About the Tutorials

For your first campaign, we recommend that you follow this tutorial in order to familiarize yourself with the game screens and controls.

> NOTE: If you can use a mouse, the keyboard commands are still useful, as you can mix and match, using a combination of mouse and keyboard action to play the game.

The campaign "Basree Cargo" is included mainly for use with this tutorial. It has very simple objectives, extremely weak opposition, and is not intended to provide any real challenge. Rather, it is designed to provide you with an introduction to **Rules of Engagement 2** and how it is played.

We recommend that you follow these instructions *very* carefully. It may be difficult (or impossible) to successfully complete the first mission if you don`t.

Creating Your Fleet Commander

Start **Rules of Engagement 2** according to the instructions for your computer (see the TECHNICAL SUPPLEMENT for details).

When the credits have ended (or you have bypassed it by pressing ESC), you will arrive at the game itself and be faced with the main game screen. On this screen are a series of control buttons, all colored brown. The first thing you need to learn about controlling **Rules of Engagement 2** is that the only buttons you can click on are brown or blue. "Highlighted" buttons are the active items. A highlighted brown button turns light brown, and a blue button/item turns cyan.

Note: Button names are listed in uppercase letters, followed by the keyboard equivalent in parenthesis. For example, a button labeled "STARCHARTS" with an overscore over the "S" would appear as STARCHARTS (S). In this case, if you are playing without a mouse, you would use the "S" key to trigger the button. In some cases, function keys are used. If so, the function key will be listed in the parenthesis.

Mouse button note: Whenever the instructions tell you to "click" the mouse it refers to the *left* mouse button, If use of the right mouse button is required you will be told to "click the right mouse button."

As you portray the Fleet Commander in the game, your first step must be to create your alter-ego. Press the RECRUITING / OFFICER`S QUARTERS (O) button. When the "office" screen appears, press the NEW (N) button to bring up the induction form.

Click on the STATS (F2) button to begin entering your Fleet Commander`s statistics. A blue bar will appear in the "name" entry. Enter a name for your Fleet Commander, up to 20 characters in length. When you are finished, press enter. The blue bar will move to the "current age" field. A default age of 20 will already be in the field. If you wish to change this, hit the backspace key twice and enter the age you desire and press enter. Otherwise, just press enter to accept an age of 20. The blue bar will now move to the "age entered service" field. A default age entered service will already be in this field. If you wish to change this, hit the backspace key twice and enter the age you desire and press enter. Otherwise, just press enter to accept the default. Both age values will not make any difference in the game itself. They are for fictional use only. The blue bar will now move to the "race" field. A default entry of "human" is already in this field. If you wish to change the race, hit backspace five times, then enter the name of the race you want (up to 20 characters) and press enter. Otherwise, if you want to keep the race set at "human", just press enter.

The stats are now complete. You may now set the gender of your Fleet Commander by using the ⬆ and ⬇ buttons. The three options are "Male", "Female", and "Other". The default is male, and if this is what you want, you may skip this step. If you want to change the gender to female, you will need to press the ⬆ button once. To set the gender to other, you will need to press the ⬆ button twice.

The final selection is the appearance of your Fleet Commander. There are eight photos available, selected by using the ⬅ and ➡ buttons. Once you have the photo you want, press the SAVE (F1) button to save your Fleet Commander to the disk. The induction form will disappear. Now, press the ESC (ESC) button to leave the Recruiting / Officer`s Quarter`s section.

Creating Your First Game

Now it`s time to create a game. Press the ASSUME COMMAND (C) button on the main game screen. The assignment screen will now appear. On the uppermost list, you will see a listing for the Fleet Commander you just created. If your character does not appear, it may be because there are more Fleet Commanders than can appear on the list at once. If this is the case, use the ⬇ button to scroll the list down.

Now, click the mouse on the name of your Fleet Commander to highlight him/her/it (keyboard users can use the ⬇ key). You have now selected your Fleet Commander as the one to be used for creating a game.

The middle list displays the campaigns available. The first campaign you should play is "Basree Cargo", which is a simple tutorial campaign provided to get you started. Click the mouse on the name of this campaign to highlight it (keyboard users should first press the "C" key to select the CAMPAIGN (C) button, then use the ⬇ key).

Near the lower left corner of the screen is an arrow shaped "make" button. Press the MAKE (M) button to begin making your game. An "usurper" box will appear that allows you to enter a name for the game. Press the EDIT NAME (E) button. A blue text editing field will appear. Enter a name for your game (like "MY FIRST GAME" for example) and press enter. Now, press the OK (O) button to create the game.

Following a brief "please stand by..." message, the game you created will appear on the lower list. If your game does not appear, it may be because there are more games than can appear on the list at once. If this is the case, use the 🖵 button to scroll the list down.

Playing Your First Game

Now, click the mouse on the name of your game to highlight it (keyboard users should first press the "G" key to select the GAME (G) button, then use the ⬇ key). Press the PLAY (P) button to begin the game.

The campaign briefing will now appear on your screen. After you have studied the briefing, press any key or click the mouse button. The briefing for the first mission will be displayed. Note the depiction of your opponent, the Basree. After you have read the briefing, press any key or click the mouse button.

The mission deployment screen will now appear. From this screen, you will deploy the ships and captains of your fleet. In the upper left region of this screen, you will see a green colored list. This is a list of ships that you have available for deployment. Although only three ships are immediately visible, scrolling the list down would reveal additional ships. For your first mission, we will deploy just two ships, the FWS Axia, and the FWS Edwards. Press the WAYPNT (W) button to bring up the ship deployment panel.

The two ships you will deploy will be assigned to waypoint XO1. The FWS Axia is already highlighted, so press the ADD (A) button to add the ship to this waypoint. Now, press the 🖵 button once to scroll the ship list down. The FWS Edwards will now be highlighted. Press the ADD (A) button once again to add this ship. Press OK (K) to send the panel away. The ships have now been assigned to the waypoint.

You will now need to assign captains to those ships. Press the CAPTAIN (P) button to bring up the captain assignment panel. A list of available captains will appear on this panel. Your Fleet Commander will also appear. You will captain the FWS Axia, and we will assign Ignacio Moreno to the FWS Edwards. To assign Moreno, click on his name (keyboard users should use the ⬇ key to highlight his name). Now, press the ASSIGN (A) button. A "YES" will appear next to his name, indicating that he has been assigned into the campaign. Now, click on the name of your Fleet Commander (keyboard users should use the ⬆ or ⬇ keys to highlight the Fleet Commander). Next, press the 🖴 key to highlight the FWS Axia once again. Press the ASSIGN (A) button to assign your Fleet Commander. Now, press the OK (K) button to remove the captain assignment panel.

You are now ready to deploy your fleet! Press the DEPLOY (Y) button. An usurper box will appear asking you to confirm deployment. Press the YES (Y) button, and the mission will begin.

You will see a blank screen with the central control bar running down the center. Currently, all of the QuadPanel spaces are free. The first thing we will do is to bring up the DATOBJ panel in quadrant 1 to confirm our mission objectives. The quad 1 button is already depressed, so no action is needed in selecting a quadrant. Press the "data" icon button (F4) to bring up the list of DAT panels. Select the entry for DATOBJ (4). In quadrant 1 (the upper left quadrant) the DATOBJ panel will appear. Note that there are two objectives to complete. You must neutralize (destroy or capture) 2 enemy ships, and get one of your ships to waypoint XO2.

Next, we will take a look at the solar system map and survey the tactical situation. Press the "quad 2" (2) button. The "quad 1" button will pop up, and the "quad 2" button will push in. Press the "sextant" icon (F1) button, and a list of the NAV panels will appear. Select the entry for NAVMAP (1) and the NAVMAP panel will appear.

The map that is displayed shows the entire solar system, a view radius (indicated on the right side of the panel) of 2,000,000,000 kilometers. The white crosshair, called the navpoint, can be ignored for the purpose of this mission. You will also see red and green numbers surrounding a clump of ships. Since your fleet is in such close proximity to the enemy ships, all ships "appear" to be at the same location at this scale. We will now zoom the map to view the area at a higher resolution.

Press the LOK (K) button, and a menu will appear with a list of your two ships. Select the FWS Axia (1). The map will now center on your ship, and the view radius will decrease to 137,000,000 kilometers (the maximum scanning range of your ship). The green numbers and vectors represent your ships, and the red numbers and vectors represent the enemy ships. Your ships are in formation, in close proximity, so they appear as a single vector. The enemy ships are fairly close together, and the vectors are actually touching each other.

To gain even more resolution, you can zoom the map in further. If you are using a mouse, move the mouse onto the map area. Yellow brackets will appear, allowing you to select the area to zoom in on. Bracket the area to include all the ships and click the mouse. To zoom with the keyboard, use the + and - keys to adjust the radius. When you press one of the keys, the map will zoom in that direction until you press the key again. Only after this second press will the map be updated. A quick finger will allow you to set the radius to include just the area inclusive of the ships.

Once the map is zoomed properly, the two enemy ships will appear as distinct vectors. But what are these ships? Select quad 3 by pressing the "quad 3" (3) button. Press the "sextant" icon (F1) button and select NAVSEN (3), the navigational sensor panel. From this panel, we can scan the two enemy ships. Press the ENS (E) button, and then the PROBE (B) button. A list of the two enemy ships will appear. Select the first, the "Song of Jonah" (1) from the list. The data on the ship will appear in the panel. As you can see, enemy ship EO1 is the transport carrying the illegal drug. To scan the other ship, press the PROBE (B) button again, and select the second ship, the "Dunas Selk" (2). This is the transport`s escort, an alien destroyer.

Your mission orders suggest sending the FWS Edwards to take on the destroyer, while you take on the transport. The next task is to order the Edwards to attack. Press the "quad 4" (4) button, and then the "antenna" icon (F2) button. This will bring up a list of the COM panels. Select COMXMT (2) from the list. The COMXMT panel will now appear.

So that we can view any incoming messages, we will also bring up the COMRCV panel. Since we don`t need NAVSEN for now, we will replace it. Press the "quad 3" (3) button, and then the "antenna" icon (F2) button. Select COMRCV (1) from the list.

Now, we will order our ship to attack. If you are using a keyboard, you will need to press the "quad 4" (4) button again so that key inputs will be directed to the COMXMT panel. If you are using a mouse, this is not necessary. Press the SELECT (S) button, and select the FWS Edwards (1) from the list. The tan box to the left of the select button will display FO2, the ID of the Edwards. So that we can receive an acknowledgment to our order, press the ACK (A) button. It will light up. To send the order, press the SEND (N) button. A list of orders will appear. There are many orders to choose from, and this list can normally be scrolled down many pages. It so happens that the order we want is on this first page. Select "Destroy Enemy Ship" (8) from the list. A second list will appear allowing you to select which enemy ship you want destroyed. Select "EO2 Dunas Selk" (2).

The message has now been sent. In a few seconds, an acknowledgment will be received in the COMRCV panel. On the NAVMAP panel (in quadrant 2), you will see the Edwards move toward EO2. The battle has begun!

Your next task is to destroy the enemy ship "Song of Jonah". To do this you will need to bring up three of the TAC (tactical) panels. Press the "quad 1" (1) button, followed by the "crosshair" icon (F3) button. Select TACFIR (1) from the list. The TACFIR panel will appear in quadrant 1. Press the "quad 3" (3) button, and then the "crosshair" icon (F3) button again. This time, select TACMAN (3), and the TACMAN panel will appear in quadrant 3. Lastly, select the "quad 4" (4) button, followed by the "crosshair" icon (F3) button. Select TACDEF (4) from the list. The TACDEF panel will appear in quadrant 4.

As a precautionary step, we will first raise the shields. On the TACDEF panel, press the SHIELDS (S) button. The shields will energize. Next, we will lock the enemy ship (EO1) into target lock A. On the TACFIR panel, press the LOK (L) button (keyboard users will need to first press the "quad 1" (1) button to activate this panel for keyboard input). A list of the two enemy ships will appear. Select EO1 (1) from the list. The ship id, EO1, will appear in target lock A, and an image of the ship will appear in the visual display. Note that the nine system status meters, below and to the left of the ship image, appear orange. This indicates the ship`s systems are already severely damaged. This should be an easy kill.

Before setting course to intercept the target, we will make a few settings to the weapons systems in preparation for combat. The Axia has a formidable complement of missiles, the most powerful of which is the Woden Nova. This missile type is armed by pressing the SELECT (S) button on the TACFIR panel. A list of missiles will appear. Each missile name is preceded by the quantity on board. There are five Woden Nova missiles, armed by selecting it from the list (7). Once the list vanishes, you will see the readout of missile type seven and quantity five displayed just to the right of the select button.

Just in case the five Woden Nova missiles don`t do the job, we will set the EBW (enhanced beam weapon) power level to maximum. If you are using a mouse, click on and drag the carat (yellowish arrowhead directly above the select button) all the way to the right of the scale. If you are using the keyboard, press the + key and wait until the pointer glides all the way to the right.

You are now ready for your first combat encounter. On the TACMAN panel, press the SHADO (H) button (keyboard users will need to first press the "quad 3" (3) button to activate this panel for keyboard input).

Watch the "range" readout on the TACFIR panel (above and to the right of the ship image). The range will decrease, indicating your approach to the target. You will also be able to see your ship approaching the target in the NAVMAP panel.

As the range falls below 1,000,000 kilometers, you will start to take some hits on your shield from the enemy ship. Return fire, launching a missile using the FIRE MSL (R) button on the TACFIR panel (keyboard users will need to first press the "quad 1" (1) button to activate this panel for keyboard input). You *must not fire* if the "acquisition" display (above and to the left of the ship image) is dimmed. If you do, the missile will fire "wild", without a target to lock onto. If the display is dimmed, wait until the weapons turret can "focus" back on the enemy ship.

If you have fired all five missiles and the enemy ship has not exploded, press the AUTO EBW (E) button to begin an automatic fire sequence for the beam weapon. If the enemy ship`s drive system is still active, he will begin evasive maneuvers to avoid your shots. If the beam weapon is not firing (due to his maneuvers), you will need to change your maneuver as well. Press POSIT (I) on the TACMAN panel (keyboard users will need to first press the "quad 3" (3) button to activate this panel for keyboard input. After selecting the POSIT button, press "quad 1 (1) again to re-activate the TACFIR panel).

Once the enemy ship has been destroyed, press the AUTO EBW (E) button to turn off the auto-fire system if you had engaged it earlier. You have just succeeded in your first combat encounter!

If you look at the NAVMAP panel, you will see that the vector for enemy ship E01 has changed to a red circle. This indicates that the ship has been destroyed. The vector for E02 may also have changed to a circle if your other ship has succeeded in destroying its target. If not, wait a few moments until E02 is destroyed.

The only remaining objective is to get one of your ships to waypoint X02. We will order our other ship to go there. Press the "antenna" icon (F2) button and select COMXMT (2) from the list. The COMXMT panel will appear in quadrant 1. Press the SEND (N) button, and select the "Proceed to Waypoint" (9) message from the list. A second list will appear with a list of waypoints. Select "X02" (2) from this list.

After about 20 seconds, you will see your other ship begin moving. He is now on course for waypoint X02, and the final mission objective. You may monitor this progress on the NAVMAP. Press the SHOW (S) button on the NAVMAP panel, and select "waypoints" (3) on the list that appears (keyboard users will need to first press the "quad 2" (2) button to activate this panel for keyboard input). Note the blue coloring of the items in this list. Unlike the other lists you have used so far, this list contains "selection" buttons that can be turned on and off. To send this list away, press the DONE (D) button at the bottom of the list.

Now, press LOK (K) and select the FWS Edwards (2). The map will re-orient, placing the Edwards at the center. You are now viewing the area around your other ship as it proceeds to the waypoint. Click on and drag the view radius carat (to the right of the map) all the way to the top of the scale (keyboard users can use the + key to move the carat).

To avoid having to wait several minutes for F02 to reach X02, you can accelerate time. Press the >> (F10) button three times. This will accelerate time to eight times normal speed. After a minute or so, waypoint X02 will appear on the map. The end of the mission is in sight.

Press the "quad 1" (1) button, and then the "data" icon (F4) button. Select DATOBJ (4) from the list. The DATOBJ panel will appear in quadrant 1. When F02 reaches the waypoint, it will check off the one remaining mission objective. You have won!

Press the "disk" icon (F7) button, and select "End Mission" (1) from the list. A clipboard will appear summarizing the results of your mission. When you have finished reading this, press any key or click the mouse button to continue.

After a brief period of disk access, the briefing for the next mission will appear. When you have finished reading this, press any key or click the mouse button to continue.

At this point, if you wish to continue playing, you may deploy your forces for the next mission. If you are done playing for now, you may press the DELAY (D) key to delay this mission until a later date.

Congratulations! You have just completed your first assignment as a commander of a Federated World`s force.

PART II: TACTICS

Knowing how to control your ship`s systems is one thing, but understanding how to use those systems in tactical situations is something completely different. This section discusses various tactics and how they can be used in a mission.

Maneuvers

Maneuvering your flagship is relatively easy, since all computations are performed by the on-board computers. Maneuvering controls are located on the NAVHLM, TACMAN, and DRPDOK panels. The operation of these controls is described in PART V: THE GAME PANELS in the FLEET OPERATIONS MANUAL.

> NOTE: The on-board computer is limited in its ability to alter your ship`s heading and velocity dependent on the type of (and damage level of) your drive system. There will be situations where a target has a more powerful drive system, effectively preventing you from being able to position your ship where you want.
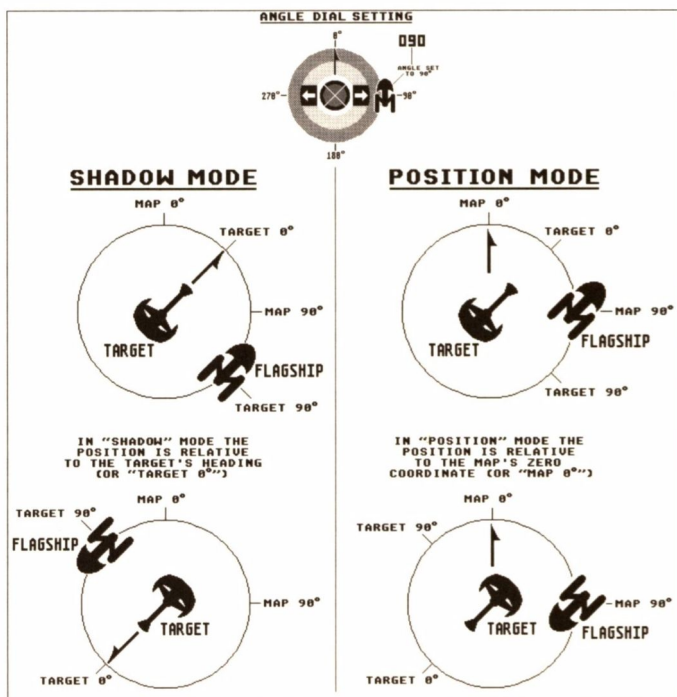
The following is a description of each maneuver and its tactical and strategic value.

INTERCEPT (NAVHLM, Button **INTRCPT**)

This maneuver will set the ship`s autopilot to intercept an object or waypoint. The autopilot will adjust course and velocity so that the ship`s velocity will be 0 upon interception. This is useful for approaching stationary targets such as planets and outposts. When targeting moving objects (such as enemy ships), the object will usually appear to move away upon being intercepted. This is due to the fact that your ship will be stopped upon intercept while the target object is still moving.

CHASE (NAVHLM, Button **CHASE**)

This maneuver is similar to intercept, but will approach the target object and hold at a

ANGLE DIAL SETTING
090
ANGLE SET TO 90°

SHADOW MODE

MAP 0°
TARGET 0°
MAP 90°
TARGET
FLAGSHIP
TARGET 90°

IN "SHADOW" MODE THE POSITION IS RELATIVE TO THE TARGET'S HEADING (OR "TARGET 0°")

TARGET 90°
MAP 0°
FLAGSHIP
MAP 90°
TARGET
TARGET 0°

POSITION MODE

MAP 0°
TARGET 0°
MAP 90°
TARGET
FLAGSHIP
TARGET 90°

IN "POSITION" MODE THE POSITION IS RELATIVE TO THE MAP'S ZERO COORDINATE (OR "MAP 0°")

MAP 0°
TARGET 90°
MAP 90°
TARGET
FLAGSHIP
TARGET 0°

range of 500,000 kilometers. If the target is moving, the autopilot will attempt to hold this distance directly behind the object. This, in effect, is chasing the object. This is useful for following an enemy ship just at the edge of weapons range.

SHADOW (TACMAN, Button **SHADO**)
This maneuver is similar to chase, but allows you to select the distance and bearing you want to be from the target. Using the angle and range attitude controls on the TACMAN panel, you can adjust these parameters. For instance, if you want to position your ship directly off the starboard (right) side of the target, set the angle to 90. To position directly in front of the target, set the angle to 0.

POSITION (TACMAN, Button **POSIT**)
The position maneuver is identical to shadow with the exception of how the angle setting is interpreted. Assuming that the angle is set to 180, shadow would try and keep your ship directly behind the target. Position would, however, try and keep your ship to the "south" of the target, regardless of the target`s heading. Refer to the figure on the previous page for an example of shadowing and positioning.

ESCAPE (TACMAN, Button **ESCAP**)
The escape maneuver is used to put some distance between your flagship and the current target. Escape will attempt to move your ship to, and maintain, a safe distance (900,000 kilometers) from the target. The computer will adjust your heading so that, at the beginning of the maneuver, you are travelling in the opposite direction as the target. This will make the escape as quick as possible. Remember that the ability to escape depends on your ship`s drive being more powerful than that of the target.

HALT (TACMAN, Button **HALT**)
Halt, the simplest maneuver, will simply stop your ship dead in space. It automatically switches manual helm control on.

EVADE (TACMAN, Button **EVADE**)
This maneuver will cause your ship to zig-zag at maximum acceleration in order to evade incoming EBW and missile fire. The usefulness of this maneuver depends on the strength of your drive system. A weak or damaged drive will not be able to out-maneuver the incoming fire.

DOCK (DRPDOK, Button **DOCK**)
You must be within 1,000 kilometers of the target. Docking with an outpost will allow you to repair and resupply your ship.

BOARD (TACMAN, Button **BOARD**)
You must be within 5,000 kilometers (1,000 km for an outpost) in order to board the target. You will need to board ships and outposts in order to capture them.

Fire Control Techniques

Key to the successful completion of most missions is your ability to combat enemy ships and Outposts. The following are hints and suggestions you can use when engaging the enemy.

1) Try to knock out critical enemy systems first. The drives and weapons system should be the primary targets. Knocking these out first will make the destruction of the other systems easier. Use the appropriate missiles in addition to pinpoint EBW fire to target these systems.

2) To make missile hits more damaging, lower your EBW power to around 50% so that you can fire rapidly. Pinpoint the shields and hit repeatedly. This will have the effect of weakening the shields, making them less resistant to missile attacks.

3) Pinpoint fire works well only with ships that cannot outmaneuver you. If you find maintaining a target lock is difficult, use the normal beam width. If you still don`t get enough hits, switch to wide beam.

4) Choose your maneuvers based on the strength of your drive system relative to that of the enemy. Some maneuvers, such as escape, work only when you have the superior drive capability. To determine the strength of the enemy drive, use your probe (from NAVSEN) to determine the class of ship you are fighting. Then refer to APPENDIX II: OPPOSING FORCES in the FLEET OPERATIONS MANUAL and look up the maximum velocity and acceleration ranges for the drive systems that could be used on that class of enemy ship. Compare these values to the values for the drive on your ship (values for your parts can be found in APPENDIX III: THE FW FLEET in the FLEET OPERATIONS MANUAL). If you do not know which drive system you have on board your ship, you can look up the part number by displaying the DATSHP panel.

5) Make frequent use of the facing control. Try to keep orienting the strongest shield towards the enemy. Remember, though, that the autopilot may not always be able to orient that shield to your liking. Maneuvering the ship requires that the ship rotate in various directions. The autopilot will, however, do its best. When in the Halt maneuver, the ship will not be under power so the autopilot will always be able to orient the selected shield.

6) When the enemy has the superior drive capability, you may be better off to select the Halt maneuver. Otherwise, your ship may simply spin around trying to keep up with the enemy ship. This may prevent you from being able to achieve a target acquisition to fire your weapons.

7) If the enemy vessel is larger than your vessel, (for example and enemy dreadnought vs. your cruiser), target the weapons systems first. In this way, you can at the very least decrease its firepower. Try to take out at least half of the weapons systems before concentrating on the drives.

Tactical Use of Asteroid Fields

Asteroid fields can be both a hindrance and a help. When a ship is within one, it risks being partially sensor-blinded by the numerous rocky objects surrounding it, which generate confusing "echoes" and distort hyperscanner field readings. The denser the asteroid field, the less sensor visibility a ship within it is likely to have. Because of this, it`s not a good idea to chase an enemy ship into a dense asteroid field, as it could evade you while in the field, or even emerge in clear space before you do, and have the advantage of being able to see - and target - you before you can see it.

On the other hand, there are several ways in which you can use asteroid fields to your advantage.

1) Lure an enemy ship into approaching you by passing through an asteroid field. If you see an enemy ship approaching you, and you are near an asteroid field, set a course (using the manual helm control) that will allow you to "skim" the outside of the field on the side opposite of the approaching enemy. Once the field is full between you and the enemy, move towards the field until you are almost at its edge, and then halt. If the enemy makes a beeline for you, he will pass right through the asteroids and, if the field is sufficiently dense, will be unable to get a fix on you until he clears the field. Meanwhile, since you`re not in the midst of the rubble, you`ll be able to see him approaching and fire EBWs several times long before he can see you. Your EBWs have a maximum "hit" range of 3 million kilometers, and, while in normal combat firing at targets over 500,000 kilometers away is wasteful, in this circumstance it`s worth trying. Since the enemy will probably be flying straight through the field, you have a greater chance of getting a hit at extreme range.

2) Lead a pursuing enemy through a dense asteroid field. As with the previous technique, if your drive is powerful enough, you`ll clear the other side of the field before your opponent does, and you can halt your ship and nail the enemy a few times before he emerges and can lock onto you.

   To do this, go to NAVHLM and set the autopilot to intercept the desired asteroid field. Your ship will make directly for the center. Once you are on course and at full speed, use the **GET** (G) button to copy the current course and velocity into the manual controls. Your ship will now fly into the asteroid field, through its heart, and out the other side. Once you emerge on the far side, you may, if the enemy has followed, be able to get a few shots in on him before he can lock onto you.

3) Hide and seek. Large, dense asteroid fields are good places to "hide" if you`re in desperate need of a breather. If the center of the field is so far "in" that an enemy`s sensors cannot detect you from outside the field, you can sit tight and lick your wounds, somewhat safer than normal from enemy attack. To do this, locate a very large, dense field and intercept it. Your ship will stop at its center.

To check an asteroid field`s density, probe it from the NAVSEN panel. The higher the density, the more sensor problems it will cause.

Doubling Back Through an Asteroid Field

Another trick you can pull with a ship pursuing you through an asteroid field is to wait until you think the enemy is in the field with you and then suddenly change course. If the field is dense enough, the enemy ships(s) might miss your course change and lose track of you. Turning at a 90 degree angle to your current heading is one course change you might try.

Damage Control and Outpost Repair/Resupply

Your ship`s crew includes repair personnel capable of repairing any of the nine systems on your ship. The crew cannot, however, repair a system that has been completely destroyed. A system is considered completely destroyed once its damage status reaches zero. At this point, the only place to repair the destroyed part is at an outpost.

You distribute your repair crew to the nine systems using the DRPREP panel. A specific percentage of the crew is allocated to each system using the controls. You may change the distribution at any time. You should distribute a higher percentage to the systems you deem most critical. Repair crews assigned to undamaged systems will sit idle until the part needs repair.

Each part on your ship has a sophistication level. The higher this number, the more sophisticated the part. Sophistication levels for your parts can be found in APPENDIX III: THE FW FLEET in the FLEET OPERATIONS MANUAL. Your crew can repair a part of any level of sophistication, however the lower level parts will be repaired much more quickly than higher level ones. In addition, the more damage a part sustains, the longer it will take to repair.

Outposts can repair your parts even more quickly, but they are limited by their sophistication level, in which parts they can work with. By using a probe on the outpost, you can ascertain its repair level. This level is the maximum sophistication part that they can repair. Outposts can also repair destroyed parts. Outposts are also your only source for resupply of missiles, mines, and decoys. Missiles, like system parts, have sophistication levels. Each outpost has a supply sophistication level. This level means the outpost has missiles up to, but not beyond, that sophistication. The sophistication level of each missile type is listed in APPENDIX IV: MISSILE SPECIFICATIONS in the FLEET OPERATIONS MANUAL. Mines and decoys do not have sophistication values associated with them. Therefore, outposts of any sophistication level can provide supplies.

After docking with an outpost, a resupply procedure will automatically be initiated. The outpost will reload your ship with its maximum compliment of missile up to the supply sophistication. Resupply of missiles takes 5 minutes for free-floating, and 15 minutes for planetary based outposts. Resupply at the planetary based outposts take longer since it is necessary for them to launch a supply shuttle into orbit that will rendezvous with your ship. Resupply of mines and decoys will take varying lengths of time. Readouts on the DRPDOK panel will keep you informed as to the progress.

Tactical Use of Self-Destruction

Your flagship is armed with a detonation system that will destroy the ship on your command. This is useful should you encounter a no-win situation. Detonating your ship will initiate a blast that will instantly destroy any ships within the primary blast radius of your primary power system, and those within the blast radius risk damage ranging from minor to critical (see APPENDIX III: THE FW FLEET in the FLEET OPERATIONS MANUAL for a listing of blast and primary radii.)

Although your Fleet Commander character will be killed, you may be able to complete the mission by using this tactic. For instance, if the only remaining victory condition is to destroy an enemy ship with which you are engaged in battle, the resulting explosion may destroy him for you.

Keep in mind that you can also order your other ships to self-destruct. Self-destruction is, however, the ultimate sacrifice a ship captain can make, so play close attention to whom you are making this request. Check the docket (available on DATDKT) of the Captain first to see if he/she is likely to obey this order.

> CAUTION! Make certain that vital mission objectives are not within dangerous proximity of a ship about to self-destruct. For instance, if you intend to blow your own ship to atoms, try to get some distance between your ship and those you want spared. Likewise, you can order ships that are near a ship you wish to destruct to go somewhere "safe".

Concentration of Fire

Several ships firing on a target do more damage than a single ship. Several EBWs and many missile hits have a better chance of overloading a shield and causing damage to a critical system. Consequently, Battle Groups are your best offensive weapon. Don`t be surprised if the enemy uses the same technique!

Surrender Tactics

Both enemy ships and Federated World ships may surrender to the opposing forces. Using the communications system, you can order any or all of your ships to surrender. You can also send a message to any enemy ship, surrendering your own flagship. Once the flagship has surrendered, the mission is lost. A surrender will in many cases be your only alternative to self-destruction or destruction at the hands of the enemy.

The enemy may or may not accept your surrender. That depends a large part on whom you are fighting. In addition, the enemy will be more susceptible to your surrendering if a large percentage of your fleet has already surrendered. The enemy dossier may contain information you can use to determine how likely it is they will accept your surrender.

The enemy may also surrender to you or one of your fleet ships. You can also send messages to enemy ships requesting their surrender. Again, the personality of the enemy plays a large part in their likelihood of surrendering to you.

Forming Battle Groups

In many missions you will have several objectives to meet. In some cases you may be required to tend to all of them quickly, and will find that there isn't time to lead your forces in all required actions. Naturally, you can order various ships to take care of certain tasks, but in situations where two or more ships may be required to meet a particular objective, it is sometimes best to form a Battle Group.

A Battle Group is a grouping of ships, the Captain of one of which you have assigned to act as the Group Leader. The Group Leader then has authority to give orders to other ships in the Group and instruct them in what to do. This is particularly handy in situations where there will be a significant communications delay between your flagship and other ships in your fleet.

The best choice for a Group Leader is a ship whose Captain is loyal, experienced, stable and ingenious (amongst other things). The reasons? First, disloyal Captains are more likely to surrender to hostile forces. Secondly, some Captains do not take orders well from captains with less experience than they themselves have, so the more experienced the Captain you selected as Group Leader is, the less likely he is to have problems with "renegade" or disobedient Captains under his command. Third, a stable, non-temperamental Captain is less likely to take rash action that could risk lives unnecessarily. In light of this, choosing Captains to act as Group Leaders is not a decision to take lightly, and choosing which ships to assign under that Group Leader is important as well, so read their dockets carefully (DATDKT panel).

> NOTE: The right Captains may not have the right ships for the job. You also have to take into account the relative strengths of the vessels commanded by those Captains you wish to assign to Battle Groups.

To form a Battle Group, go to COMXMT and send the order "FORM BATTLE GROUP" to the ship you have selected as a Group Leader (you cannot send it to ALL ships). If ACKNOWLEDGE is on, the Captain of that ship will acknowledge the order when (and if) he/she forms the group. If not, the next time the ship sends you a status report (send the order "REPORT STATUS" or activate the **ALL SHIPS REP...** button), its group status will be reported. The Group Leader *must* notify you that it has formed a group in one of these fashions *before* you can assign other ships to join that group.

> NOTE: A ship selected as a Group Leader will, on *some* readouts, have its normal Ship I.D. replaced by a Group I.D. Thus, if you assigned ship F07 to form the first Battle Group, its I.D. would be changed to G01.

Once the Group Leader has acknowledged the Group formation (you will receive the message "FORMING BATTLE GROUP G*n*" (where *n* is the Group number; 00-99). You can then send the order "JOIN BATTLE GROUP" to the ships you wish (if you send the order to ALL ships, all ships but your own and the selected Group Leader will join the Group). Ships obeying the order will, if the ACKNOWLEDGE flag is on, respond "JOINING WITH GROUP G*n*".

Deploying Battle Groups

Once a Battle Group has been formed, all you need to do to deploy it is to send an order to the Group Leader. If you order the Group Leader to destroy a particular enemy vessel, the entire Group will follow the order (as always, this depends on the Captain leading the Group and those under his/her command).

It is important to issue orders *only* to the Group Leader, because sending a specific order to a ship or ships within a Group will cause them to automatically disband from the Group ("REPORT STATUS" is the only order that you can send to a Battle Group "follower" that will not cause that ship to disband).

As you issue orders to the Group Leader, the ships led by it will, if ACKNOWLEDGE was on when you sent the last order to the Group Leader, report "GROUPED WITH G*n*" to let you know they are following the actions of the Leader.

Disbanding Battle Groups

When you wish to break up a particular Battle Group, send the order "DISBAND FROM BATTLE GROUP" to the Group Leader.

To have individual ships leave a Battle Group without disbanding the entire Group, send the "DISBAND..." order to the specific ships you want to break free from the group, or send those ships specific orders to do other things (such as "MANEUVER AT WILL", "DESTROY ENEMY SHIP", etc.).

You can break up all existing Battle Groups by issuing the "DISBAND..." order to ALL ships. This order will affect all Groups, but will not affect ships ordered to form with your flagship (see following section).

Forming with the Flagship

In addition to ordering a Captain to form a Battle Group and instructing ships to join that Group, you can order the ships under your command to form the equivalent of a Battle Group with your own ship acting as the Group Leader. Send the order "FORM WITH FLAGSHIP" to those ships you want to lead. If the Captains of those ships obey the order (as always, whether they do or not depends on their personalities), their ships will follow yours and do what you do. If you set a specific course, they will follow it.

> NOTE: This order does *not* form an "official" Battle Group, and your flagship will not be assigned a G (Group) designator on the map displays.

The "FORM WITH FLAGSHIP" order is really just an instruction for ships to follow you. If you attack an enemy ship while other ships are grouped with you, the Captains of those ships may not join the attack until you issue an attack order.

Hints On Keeping Your Battle Group Together

When a Battle Group is formed, the ships in it follow the lead of the Group Leader. The danger in such formations is that not all ships have the same maximum velocity. It is possible for the ship leading the Group to outdistance one or more of the Group members when moving towards a target. This is potentially dangerous, because it can lead to your forces being widely scattered, resulting in some ships of the Group encountering the enemy prior to others. If you intend to work from a strength-in-numbers posture, you do *not* want to spread your Battle Group out. The problem here is that the autopilot modes, such as chase and intercept (NAVHLM panel), set your ship on a full-power course for the selected target. Velocity in such modes is controlled by the ship`s computer. Ideally, you want to set course for the target and then maintain a velocity which will allow even the slowest ships in your Battle Group to keep pace.

This need can be met through use of the manual helm control on the NAVHLM panel. Using the autopilot controls, you would set out to chase or intercept a given target. Once the desired heading has been set, activate the **GET** (G) button, which switches to manual control while maintaining the heading and velocity set by the autopilot mode. After **GET** has copied these values into the manual helm control, you can make appropriate adjustments to your velocity to ensure that all of the ships formed with you can keep up. In this way you don`t end up scattering your forces.

The drawback to this approach is that it doesn`t work well on nearby fast-moving or distant moving targets, since, in manual mode, your ship does not automatically correct course to compensate for moving targets. To solve this logistical problem you will either need to manually adjust your heading, or switch back to an autopilot mode for a moment and then use **GET** again to pick up the new heading. In either case, you will want to do this periodically in order to avoid wasting a great deal of time.

Disbanding a Flagship Formation

As with any other Battle Group, ships that are formed with your flagship can be disbanded from your "group" by issuing other orders to those ships. Sending the order "DISBAND FROM BATTLE GROUP" to ships formed with your flagship is equivalent to a "MANEUVER AT WILL" order.

Capturing Outposts

In some missions you may be required to capture one or more enemy outposts. Even if you are not compelled to take over such outposts, in some circumstances you may find it to your advantage to seize strategically placed enemy or neutral outposts. Enemy ships cannot get resupplied or repaired at outposts controlled by your forces, so it makes strategic sense to capture outposts your enemies could seek assistance from. Naturally, the enemy won`t just sit still for this. They may very well try to capture such outposts themselves, or even go after established FW outposts to try to cut off *your* supply and repair lifeline.

If you have two or more outposts as potential "capture" targets, the one you pick to go after first should be determined by balancing which is of greatest value to the enemy (sophistication) against their positions relative to enemy ships.

HINT: If you have to choose between two nearby and similarly sophisticated outposts, one free-floating and the other planet-locked, capture the free-floating one first. It takes longer for ships to resupply at planet-locked outposts, so enemy ships who attempt to resupply their missiles while you`re occupied won`t get the jump on your forces as quickly.

Capturing an outpost is accomplished from the TACFIR and TACMAN panels. You must knock out the outpost`s shields (TACFIR) and then board it (TACMAN). If the boarding action is successful, the outpost is yours. Following a successful outpost capture, your marines will repair the outpost`s shields to hold off enemy ships. Likewise, if you abandon a capture attempt, the outpost personnel will themselves repair their shield systems.

Destroying Outposts

Outposts can be destroyed. Outposts (with the exception of settlement outposts) have armament, ranging from light to a fully armed. Battle Groups are once again your best resource.

Should you decide to take on an outpost yourself, remember that your only target is the shields. You cannot target any other system of an outpost, as they are heavily protected deep within the complex. Continual fire after the outpost`s shields have been destroyed will ultimately result in the destruction of the outpost.

Another tactic is to destroy the shields, then move in and capture the outpost. Once you capture the outpost, you can then remove whatever cargo you need, then fire until the outpost is destroyed.

Regardless of what tactic you use, you will take heavy damage when facing a military outpost. If you are less than a three ship formation, you should use the "capture then destroy" tactic.

Dealing With Non-Objective Enemy Ships

In some missions your orders may require you to capture or destroy specific enemy ships, etc., that leave other enemy ships essentially "non-objective" items. In such circumstances, destroying such ships is a complete waste of time. Your only concern with such ships is the threat they pose to your ships and outposts. Therefore, the best way to eliminate such threats, if you get the chance, is to disable them. For example, if confronted by a non-objective ship that threatens your forces, concentrate your attack on knocking out the ship`s drive system. If you completely destroy the ship`s drive, it will be forever unable to maneuver and effectively "neutralized". You can therefore leave it for later.

Crippling Enemy Ships

In some cases, you may need to deal with some pressing problem (like assisting a ship or outpost in danger) while in the act of fighting an objective enemy vessel (one you must capture or destroy). In such cases a useful tactic is to attempt to cripple the ship in question in such a way that it is temporarily rendered "lame". For example, if you severely demage the target`s drive, chances are you might be able to go and take care of other business and return to finish the target before it can repair the damage or reach an outpost. Likewise, a ship threatening an outpost could be dealt with by damaging its weapons system. If it can`t fire, it can`t penetrate the outpost`s defenses, and thus, the outpost is spared... for the time being. Also, if your attention is required elsewhere, you could cripple the current target, then order another ship to "finish" it while you go off about more urgent business.

Keeping an Enemy from Calling for Help

If you are in a system with at least one hot star (such as a class F, A, or B) and can ambush an enemy ship nearby such a star, the interference generated by the star will keep him (and, alas, you) from being able to call for help from his fellows. To determine the type of a system`s star(s), probe it from the NAVSEN panel. The star type will be displayed. The hotter the star, the more communications interference it will cause. Also, the closer a ship is to a star, the greater the interference, so catching an enemy nearby a cooler star may have the same effect as being farther from a hotter star.

Refer to "Map Items - Stars" in PART II: OVERVIEW of the FLEET OPERATIONS MANUAL for more information on star temperatures in relation to star classes.

Special Maneuvers

THE SLINGSHOT
This maneuver will "slingshot" your ship past an enemy. You fire as you reach the closet distance, and once again as you recede. This usually causes many hits to an enemy vessel.

Lock onto a target with the TACFIR panel. Then, using TACMAN, set the range factor to 1 and select the POSITION maneuver. You will begin closing on the enemy. When you are within 300,000 kilometers, begin firing missiles and EBW. It`s best to set the EBW to autofire so you can concentrate on using missiles. This tactic works best when selecting missiles that cause general damage. As you slingshot past the enemy and approach 10,000 kilometers, select the HALT maneuver on the TACMAN panel. The enemy will continue moving away from you. Continue firing on the ship.

Wait until the enemy swings around and heads toward you, then select the POSITION maneuver once again to slingshot back towards the enemy.

STOP AND GO

This maneuver moves your ship forward in spurts. It is very effective in one-on-one or one-on-two combat. The erratic movement of your ship will result in fewer EBW and missile hits.

Lock onto a target with the TACFIR panel. Then, using TACMAN, set the range factor between 20,000 and 50,000 kilometers and select the POSITION maneuver. As you move toward the enemy, randomly select HALT, wait a few seconds, then select POSITION. This maneuver is less effective if more than two ships are attacking.

ROTATE AND SHOOT

In this maneuver, you continue to change shield facing toward the enemy as you fire. Use the facing control on the TACMAN panel to rotate your ship so that the strongest shield faces the enemy. If several ships are attacking from different directions, this tactic is less effective.